(b) whether Government are thinking of enacting some law to severely punish unscrupulous doctors who are aiding and abetting in committing this ghastly crime?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The information received from National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) states that gender-wise information in infanticide/feticide is not maintained. As per data available with NCRC, 9 cases of infanticide have been registered in Punjab for the year 2005, which is not the highest in the country.

(b) The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC & PNDT) Act, 1994 has explicit provisions for the use, regulation and monitoring of ultrasound machines to curb their misuse for detection of the sex of the fetus. The Act prohibits determination and disclosures of the sex of fetus, as well as any form of advertising about facilities of pre-natal determination of sex. A Committee has been constituted under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (HFW) to propose amendments to the Act and make it more effective.

Rate of adoption of Indian children

†4272. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of adoption of Indian children has declined during past few years;

(b) whether it is being considered to relax the law related to adoption of Indian children by foreigners; and

(c) the details of the efforts being made to encourage Indian couples for adoption of children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The procedure related to adoption of Indian children has been provided under 'Guidelines for Adoption from India-2006'. These guidelines replaced the earlier guidelines in order to bring in more simplicity and transparency. However, these guidelines/provisions are also subject to regular review in order to make them more efficient and child friendly.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Promotional activities like extensive awareness and advocacy efforts are undertaken by Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) and its associated agencies to encourage Indian couples for adoption of Indian children.

Social security benefits to anganwadi workers

4273. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would provide social security benefits to Anganwadi workers; and

(b) whether Government would agree to pay price-index linked D.A. to Anganwadi workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima Yojana, for Anganwadi workers and Anganwadi helpers, under the ICDS, is in force.

The premium under the Scheme is Rs. 280/- per annum per member out of which Rs. 100/- is paid by LIC from Social Security fund, Rs. 100/- by the Government of India. The Rs. 80/- which was to be paid by the Anganwadi worker/helper (insured member), has since been waived off *w.e.f.* 1.4.2007 for two years.

The total number of lives covered under this scheme, during 2006-07 is 4,59,633.

(b) The ICDS Scheme envisages Anganwadi workers to be "honorary" workers from the local community who come forward to render services on part time basis. They are paid a monthly honoraria, as decided by the Government from time to time. Being honorary workers, the question of payment of Dearness Allowance does not arise.

Hostels for working women

4274. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hostels for working women run by Central Social Welfare Board, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that these hostels are in poor maintenance, and hostel premises are utilized for commercial and other purposes;